

Mosaic governance

A multi-method approach for engaging diverse groups in the planning of green spaces and meeting spots

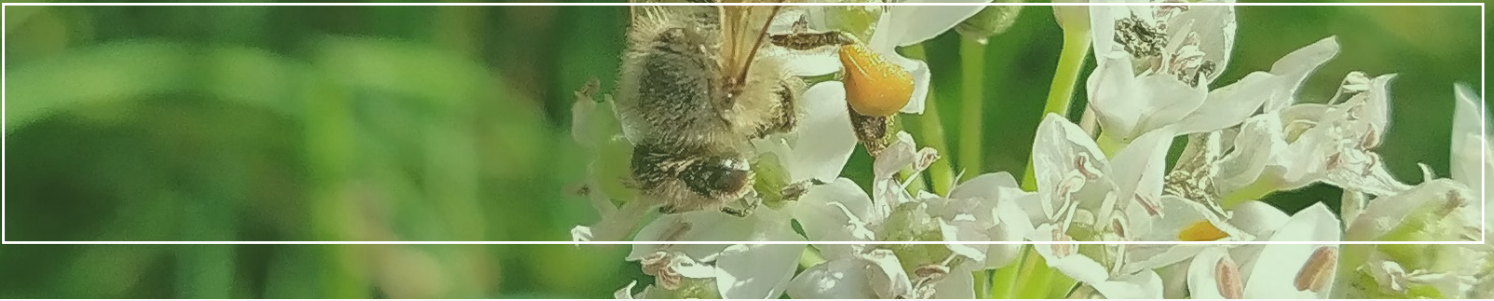


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Photos from the cover:

1. Photo courtesy of Natalie Gulsrud. Community greening day, Urbanplanen. May 2021.
2. Photo courtesy of Natalie Gulsrud. Local resident in urbanplanen showing off his garden bed and discussing the importance of sharing seeds and food in community. July 2018.
3. Photo courtesy of Romina Rodela. Ronna VIVA-PLAN Event: Small group work on three challenges. August 2021.



1

The challenge of engaging diverse groups in sustainable spatial planning

Public access to housing and leisure environments that are sustainable, safe and secure for people and communities is a major challenge in Sweden and Denmark. While urban green spaces such as vegetated areas, forests and recreation areas have an important role in supporting human wellbeing (Ekkel and de Vries 2017; Raymond et al. 2017) and increasingly social inclusion (Haase et al. 2017), issues of safety and security can also emerge (Taylor and Hochuli 2017).

How to engage diverse groups in sustainable spatial planning is another major planning issue. The diverse needs of marginalised groups including new migrants and youth have been overlooked in green space research and sustainable spatial planning practice. This engagement is particularly important in Sweden where 375,000 persons — nearly 4% of the population — have been granted asylum or were reunited with family members between 2009 and 2018 (Emilsson and Öberg 2021). Public participation in green space planning is challenged by issues of sustained recruitment and engagement of groups. It is also challenged by language and communication issues, and limitations in organisation capacity; or access to knowledge, social connections and skills necessary to participate in green space planning initiatives (Fors et al. 2021).

To actively engage such diverse groups in sustainable spatial planning, there needs to be a deeper exploration of distributional, procedural and recognition justice. Distributional justice considers the fair allocation of benefits services (Kabisch and Haase 2014), as well as acknowledging the historic inequalities embedded in ecosystem services production and consumption (Andersson et al. 2019; Langemeyer and Connolly 2020).

Procedural justice concerns how decisions are made and which affected groups participate in design, planning and management of public spaces, and on what terms (Low 2013; Martin et al. 2016; Schlosberg 2007). Recognition justice acknowledges the social cohesion and functioning of the community, not solely individual exposures (Schlosberg 2013).

The aim of this synthesis fact sheet is to present a sustainable spatial planning framework for revitalising green spaces and meeting spots for social inclusion, biodiversity and well-being, including safety and security. We provide important insights for city planners about how new partnerships can be established between social entrepreneurs, NGOs, municipalities and marginalised groups, with a view to achieve social inclusion, biodiversity and well-being outcomes in green spaces and associated meeting spots. This work is supported by VIVA-PLAN, an international research consortium funded by FORMAS, The Swedish Research Council for Sustainable Development.



2

Mosaic governance: a new approach to engaging diverse groups in the planning of green spaces and meeting spots

The sustainable spatial planning framework developed in VIVA-PLAN builds on a “mosaic governance” approach to urban planning and governance (Buijs et al. 2019). Mosaic governance focuses on developing policies, funding mechanisms and participation platforms to reach out to and collaborate with civil society, including marginalised groups. It also seeks to build networks of actors across planning sectors (Buijs et al. 2016). Research has shown that through combining governmental and non-governmental efforts, mosaic governance yields higher environmental outputs, contributes to upscaling of local green initiatives; as well as downscaling environmental policies. It also contributes to place-making and place-keeping, unleashes local resources, including knowledge and expertise, develops trust between actors, strengthens implementation of nature-based solutions and empowers local groups (Buijs et al. 2019).

Reaching out to marginalised groups in urban green planning and management can be challenging. These groups are very diverse, trust in institutions and groups, social cohesion and cultural capital may be low; and language and cultural barriers may hinder effective communication (Jackson et al. 2018). Developing long-term relationships with these communities is essential for just and inclusive social planning (Ambrose-Oji et al. 2017). Collaboration and building networks to navigate the diversity of urban communities, including marginalised groups, is key to mosaic governance.

VIVA-PLAN has used a wide variety of research and engagement methods to understand, discuss, and build relations between local community, municipalities and housing agencies. We have used several social science methods to elucidate visions and desires from marginalised groups in our study areas, and used these insights as input for co-creation sessions with relevant stakeholders. The VIVA-PLAN multi-method approach used four different inter-related streams of research and co-creation approaches, to contribute to sustainable spatial planning (see also **Figure 1**):

STREAM 1

Draws on participatory mapping to assess social values and preferences for green spaces and meeting spots and field ecology research methods to assess ecological values. Social and ecological values were then overlaid to inform socially acceptable and scientifically defensible areas for conservation.

STREAM 2

Combines group discussions and interviews with mapping of institutional actors to identify social networks of importance to marginalised residents, and how these networks can be strengthened to address residents' needs.

STREAM 3

Combines insights from Stream 1 and 2, which inspired the implementation and evaluation of two co-creation events (hackathons or 'VIVA-Hacks'); that engage youth, NGOs, and the public and private sector in the planning of green spaces and meeting spots.

STREAM 4

Draws together insights from Streams 1-3, to inform a sustainable spatial planning framework for revitalizing green space and meeting spots, in order to improve social inclusion, biodiversity and well-being. This synthesis report is core to Stream 4.

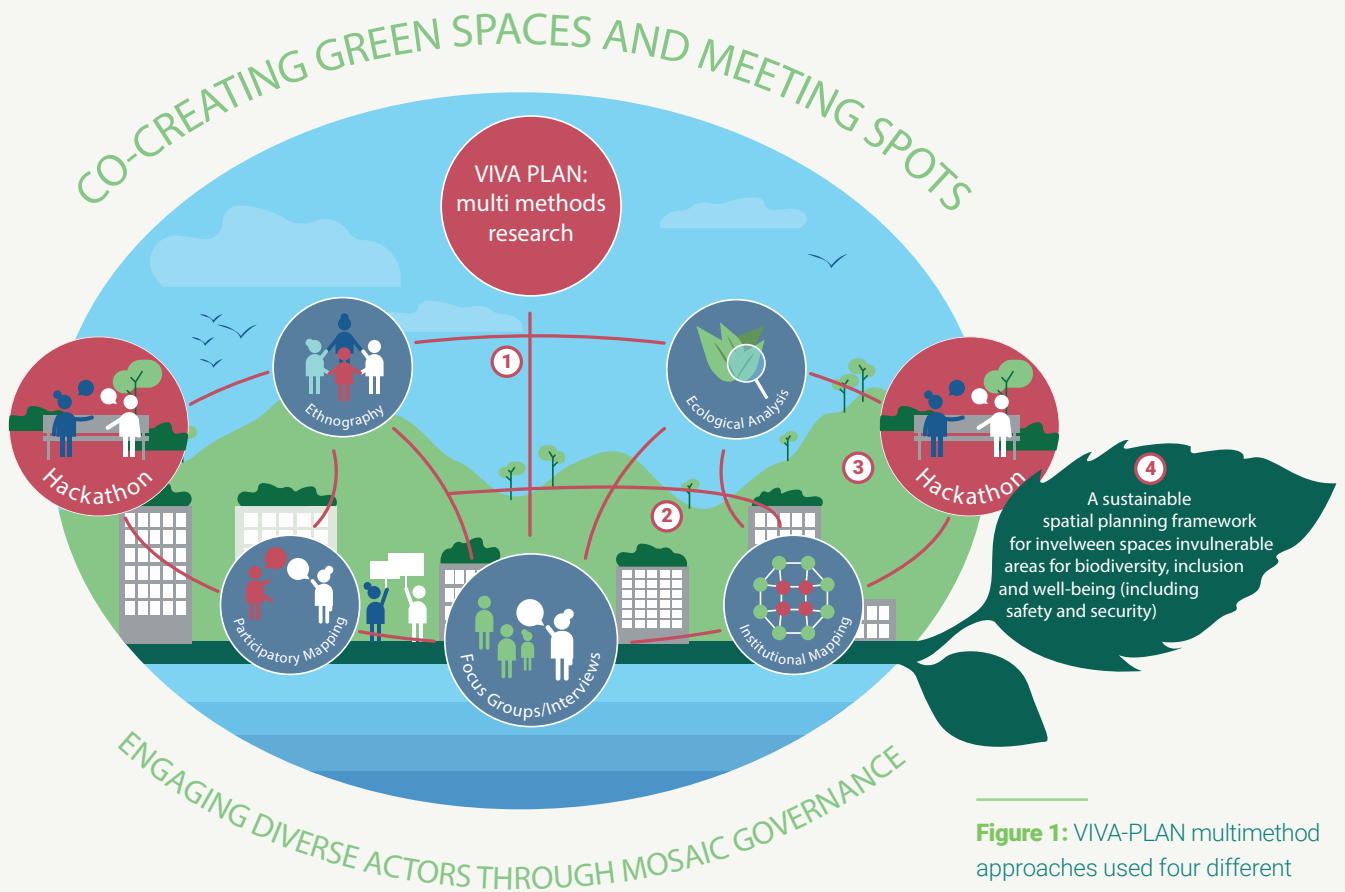


Figure 1: VIVA-PLAN multimethod approaches used four different interrelated streams of research and co-creation approaches, to contribute to sustainable spatial planning.

3

Application of mosaic governance in three case areas

Three urban districts were included for study in the VIVA-PLAN project. Two of these are located in Sweden (Ronna in Södertälje, Lorensborg / Bellevuegården in Malmö) and one in Denmark (Urbanplanen in Copenhagen). These cases were selected because they share similar environmental challenges and opportunities. All are socially and economically marginalised urban areas, with a highly diverse population. In addition, they all have in-between green spaces of which use and development is being contested.

3.1 | Urbanplanen, Copenhagen

Urbanplanen is a socially and economically diverse neighbourhood located in Copenhagen, Denmark. It is one of Copenhagen's and Denmark's largest cohesive social housing residential areas. The neighbourhood aims to open up both socially and physically to the rest of Copenhagen through nature-based solutions for climate adaptation and social cohesion. Urbanplanen houses approximately 6,000 residents and the 450 ha site has 50 ha of public urban green spaces. Remiseparken, a municipal public park in the heart of Urbanplanen, has recently been renewed to act as a climate sponge park, in addition to an attractive green meeting spot for residents and outsiders alike. Fruit trees have been planted in one end to make the park edible while a new skater park has been installed to provide lively recreational opportunities for youth. Two staffed municipal playgrounds provide vibrant green meeting spots for children and parents. Both playgrounds have a strong focus on nature education. The common green spaces in Urbanplanen are characterized by homogeneous fields of grass in addition to well-trimmed shrubs surrounding housing areas and parking lots.

Photo courtesy of Natalie Gulsrud. Youth employed by FRAK in Urbanplanen tending flower beds planted with local and biodiverse seeds. May 2021.



Safety and the overall reputation of the area represent some of the main challenges facing local residents, the municipality, and the many on-site partners in ensuring a high quality of life for residents. Recently, the housing company that runs Urbanplanen, KAB, initiated a campaign across all of their housing areas, to increase biodiversity in the common green areas. A larger green infrastructure renewal process in Hørgården, a housing block in Urbanplanen, focuses largely on increasing biodiversity in the areas through resident engagement in planting and maintaining native flower beds and pollinator-friendly plantings.

3.2 | Lorensborg and Bellevuegården, Malmö

Lorensborg and Bellevuegården are neighbouring districts located in the Western part of Malmö, Sweden's third largest city. Lorensborg was built at the end of the 1950s and Bellevuegården in the 1970s (Länsstyrelsen Skåne Län 2002; 2004). Today there are about 9,500 residents in the area, which is dominated by rental apartments, with up to 16 floors. Green courtyards form a large part of the green structure of the area, and there are several parks nearby. Employment rates in Lorensborg and Bellevuegården are 20% below the average of Sweden (Malmö stad 2021a). There are also major issues regarding safety in the areas, especially in Bellevuegården. Bellevuegården is classified as a 'risk area' because of high crime rates and social exclusion (Nationella operativa avdelningen 2017). The main planning challenge here is the planned densification of both Lorensborg and Bellevuegården, which will partly remove green spaces from backyards, alleys, street areas and parking places (Malmö stad 2021b).

Photo courtesy of C. Haaland.
Lorensborg, Malmö, Sweden.



3.3 | Ronna, Södertälje

Ronna is a small neighbourhood located at the northwest of Södertälje with a total population of 8,000 residents (SCB 2021). The neighbourhood is part of the Swedish “Million Program”, a social housing project that put up one million units across Sweden during the period from the 1960s and 1970s (Mack 2021). Rental apartments made up about 65% of the total housing as of 2018 (SCB 2021). Ronna is characterised by above average unemployment, low income and education levels, high criminal activity (Nationella operativa avdelningen 2017), and low voter turnout in general and city council elections (SCB 2021). The district is classified as an ‘especially vulnerable area’ (in Swedish language: särskilt utsatt område) by the Swedish Police.

Even though Ronna is surrounded by a large urban forest (Södertälje Kommun 2021a), a pressing issue for urban governance is that some outdoor environments, playgrounds, green spaces and infrastructure are experienced as worn and under-maintained. Residents also report a lack of public places and areas where they can meet, especially for youth. While there also exists a pattern of a pessimistic and stigmatizing framing of the area, locals report on their experience of Ronna as “visually and socially attractive, a friendly and beautiful place” (Mack 2021, p. 1).



Photo courtesy of Kari Lehtilä.
Ronna.



4

Overview of main findings

4.1 | Combining social and ecological values

Residents' values for green spaces are often considered in isolation of the ecological aspects of biodiversity in planning and governance. However, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 calls on planners to implement new green space management planning that accounts for biodiversity, justice and human well-being outcomes (European Commission 2020). In this study, public participation GIS was used to spatially identify residents' values for biodiversity (i.e. social values), and field ecological techniques were employed to identify ecological values. We then spatially compared these social and ecological values.

Participatory mapping involved sending by regular post of 1,400 survey invitation letters to adult residents in Lorensborg and Bellevuegården and Ronna, respectively during the spring and autumn of 2020. Less than 5% survey response was achieved in each area, demonstrating the challenges of engaging marginalised groups using traditional survey methods. The survey was designed and distributed using the Maptionnaire tool¹. In the web-based survey, participants were asked to identify and map their values and preferences for green spaces and meeting places in their residential area using a pre-defined typology. Since the method allows participants to express both their current appreciation and their preferences for how the area should be developed, it is a useful tool for inclusion of diverse perspectives in planning and governance.

The field ecology research was conducted in Malmö and Ronna in 2020. In Malmö, we examined green spaces within Lorensborg and Bellevuegården, in addition to four parks that are only partially included in the planning area. The study area has a size of approximately 73 ha, and a total of approximately 48.5 ha of green spaces. Out of these, approximately half consist of public areas (parks, street greenery) and half of residential estates, which are located on both private land and land owned by the city of Malmö, leased by tenant-owner associations. In Ronna, we examined green spaces included in the structural plan for Ronna (Södertälje Kommun 2021). Of the total area of Ronna of 160 ha, the inventory included 73 ha of green spaces. The inventoried green spaces consist of residential courtyards of multi-family houses, street greenery and forest.

¹ A map-based tools for designing questionnaires, collecting data, and conveying information <https://maptionnaire.com/>

Thematic maps were generated for all social values and preferences for both sites. A map-overlay was carried out in order to visually compare the social values with the ecological inventories, including existing green spaces and number of taxa¹.

¹ Taxa includes both species and genera, when not identified to species level.

4.2 | Bellevuegården and Lorensborg overlay results

Lorensborg and Bellevuegården are characterized by a high proportion of green structure, but with different levels of ecological value indicated by the number of taxa (**Figure 2**). The overlay of social and ecological values identified through our public participation GIS survey shows that some places that were marked with many social values also contain high ecological values (**Figure 3**). These were mostly green spaces in the south (Bellevueparken), as well as the larger residential courtyards. Bellevueparken has the character of an old deciduous woodland, and is quite special for the area in the way that it represents more wild appearing nature in the area. Other areas indicated high social values, but low ecological values. Examples for these are Stadionparken and the eastern part of Bellevueparken. Here you find newly established, large playgrounds as well as other facilities such as dog areas or informal sport fields. Areas with high ecological values and low social values were not so common (e.g. few backyards). One of the parks and some of the smaller sized backyards could be identified as areas with low ecological and social values.

Participants preferred restoration of nature in particular in areas (e.g. Stadionparken), that today are characterised by large lawns with low ecological values. In such areas also more sports facilities would be appreciated. New meeting places were asked for in many places of the study area. The same applies for better light facilities.



*Photo courtesy of
C. Haaland. Sownflowers
Lorensborg*

Figure 2

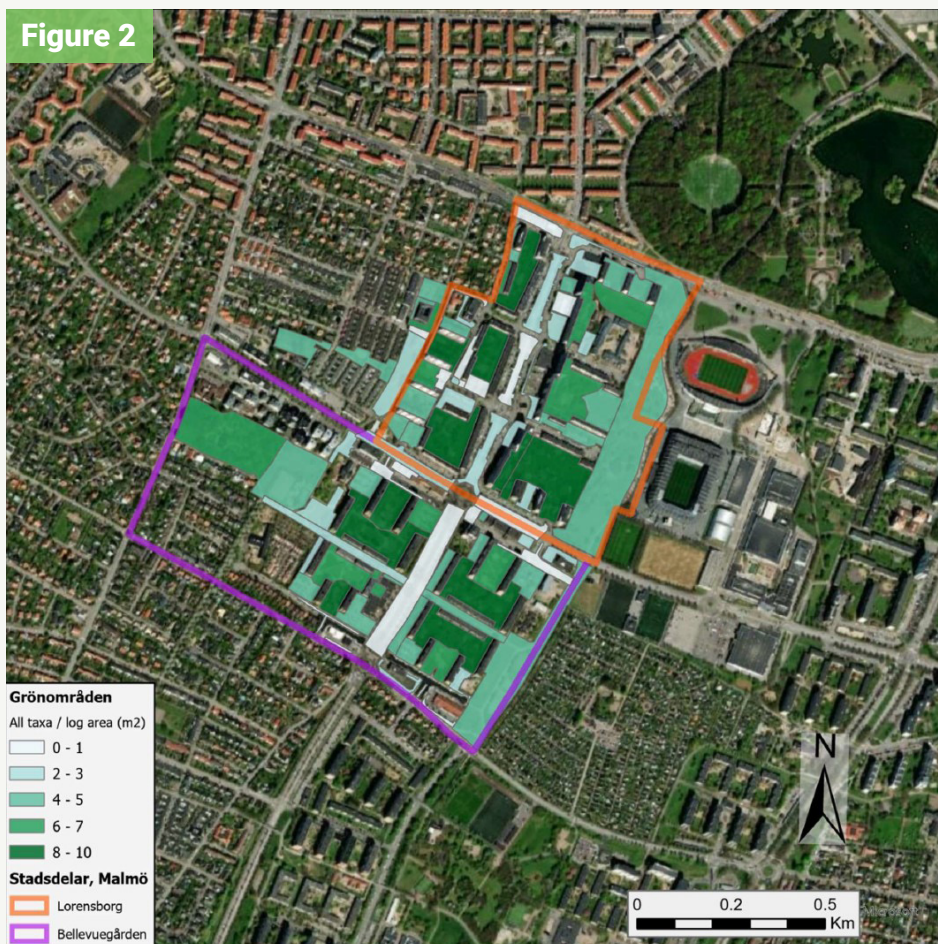


Figure 2: Number of tree and shrub taxa (native and exotic) per green area unit in Lorensborg and Bellevuegården, Malmö (Sweden).

Figure 3

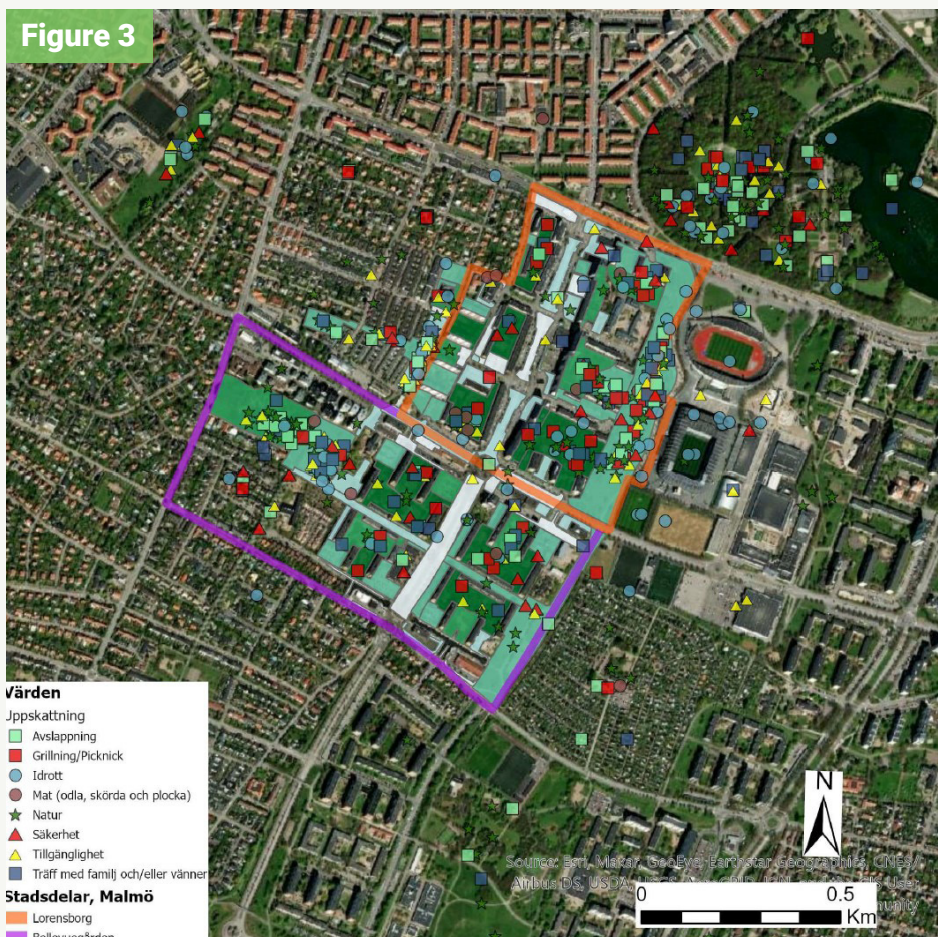


Figure 3: Social values - this is appreciated by inhabitants in Lorensborg and Bellevuegården, Malmö (Sweden).

4.3 | Ronna, Södertälje overlay results

The neighbourhood is surrounded by Ronna forest (**Figure 4**), which in certain areas has both high ecological and social values (**Figure 5**). Some smaller forested areas and road verge vegetation had high ecological, but low social values. The central parts of the neighbourhood and the main street, Robert Anbergs väg, have high social values, whereas their ecological values are low. These parts have lawns and grey infrastructure that are appreciated due to their meeting places, sports fields, barbeque areas and safety.

There is a lack of designed urban parks in Ronna, but larger areas of green space are either forest or meadow-type open vegetation. Management of green space is not very intensive, which can be beneficial for the biodiversity of plants, pollinators and many other species. There is a strong contrast in green spaces in the northern part, consisting of apartment buildings, and the southern part with single-family houses. The green space in the northern part is public, whereas the green spaces in the southern part are mostly private gardens and yards. In the social value mapping, the southern part did not receive any interest by the respondents.

Photo courtesy of The Public Health Image Library from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Figure 4

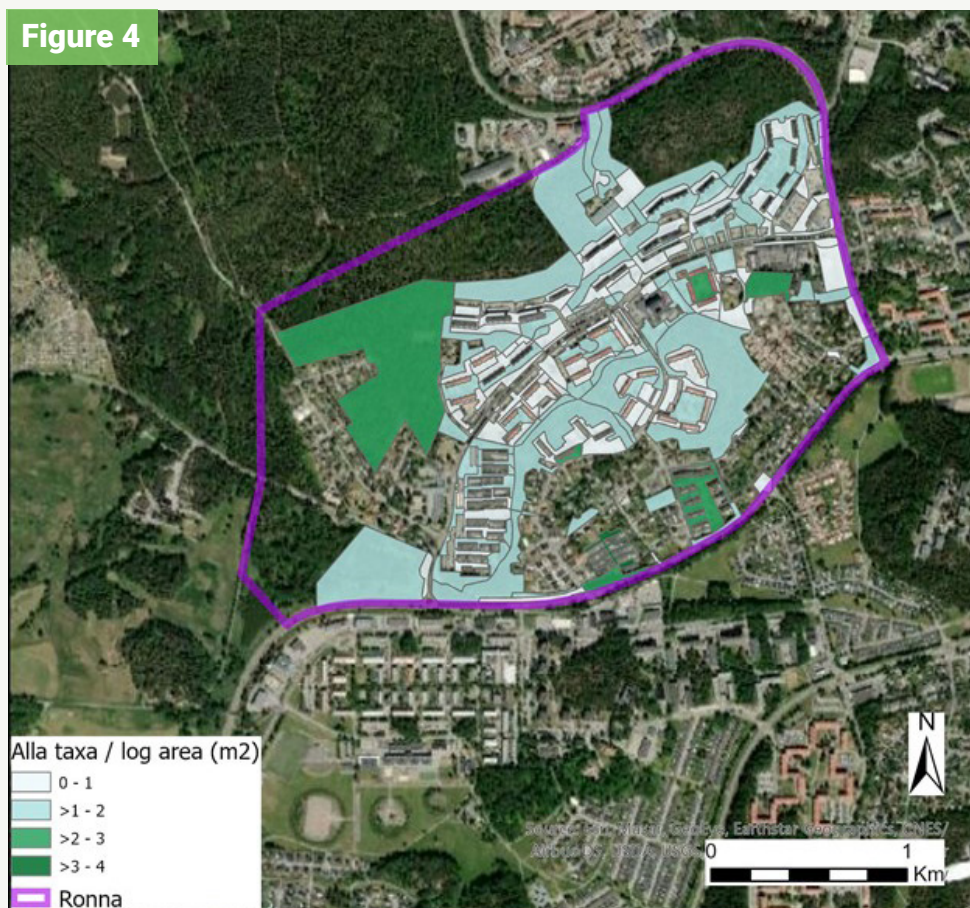


Figure 4: Number of tree and shrub taxa (native and exotic) per green area unit in Ronna, Södertälje (Sweden).

Figure 5

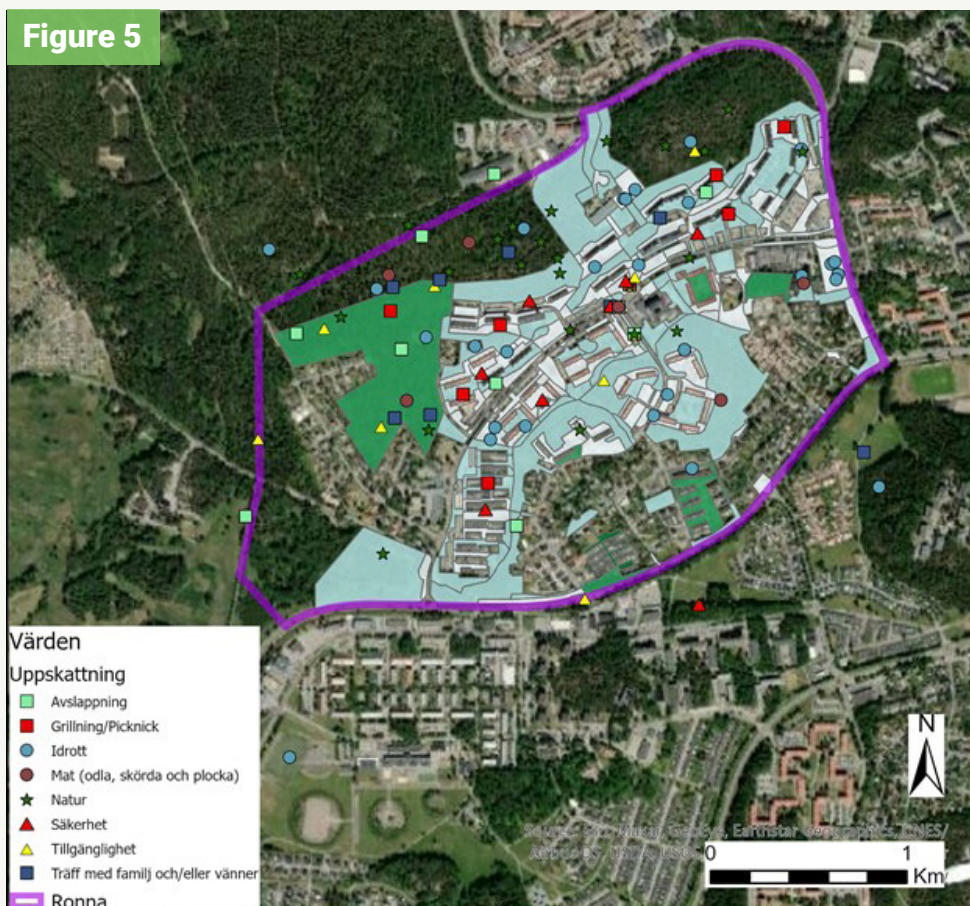


Figure 5: Social values - this is appreciated by inhabitants in Ronna, Södertälje (Sweden).

4.4 | Environmental justice implications

This study provides a spatial overview of the existing ecological green structure, as well as the social values and preferences linked to those in Bellevuegården and Lorensborg, and in Ronna. Green space with high biodiversity value were often appreciated, but even green spaces assessed as low ecological value can often have important benefits for residents. This study is useful for understanding how different ecological and social values coexist, which places and functions can give rise to conflicts of interest, and where synergies can be created between the needs of residents and those of planning or conservation practitioners. It helps planners to seek solutions taking both biodiversity benefits and social benefits into account.

Photo courtesy of Melissa Askew





5

Multi-level institutional networks and the importance of networks of care

VIVA-PLAN also conducted network analysis in Urbanplanen and Ronna, to identify best practices in engaging and listening to the diverse voices of residents, social enterprises, housing agencies and a municipality. Here, we focused on mapping social networks (**Figure 6**) linking to issues of residential social inclusion and exclusion in the planning and management of urban green spaces. Additionally, we mapped green initiatives in the case sites within the nested networks of green governance (**Figure 7**).

Despite general awareness of the environmental justice issues posed by urban green governance, there are comparatively few methods for assessing and integrating multiple elements of environmental justice into green space planning and management (Adams et al. 2018). To capture diverse sense of place and how these link to perceived procedural and representative environmental justice, we have conducted a complete network analysis, based on a mosaic governance arrangement (Buijs et al. 2019). The network analysis includes individual residents, community groups, expert groups and politicians at the city and the national level. Such an analysis has potential to uncover social cohesion or dissonance on a broader scale, and provides insight into governance trends and mechanisms (Nunan 2015 ch. 6; Prell and Bodin 2011).

*Photo courtesy of C. Haaland.
Holly blue Bellevuegården.*



5.1 | Social network analysis methods

Our analysis of resident and actor relations draws on data collected in the Copenhagen neighborhood of Urbanplanen from November 2019 to August 2021, as well as in Ronna from March to August 2021.

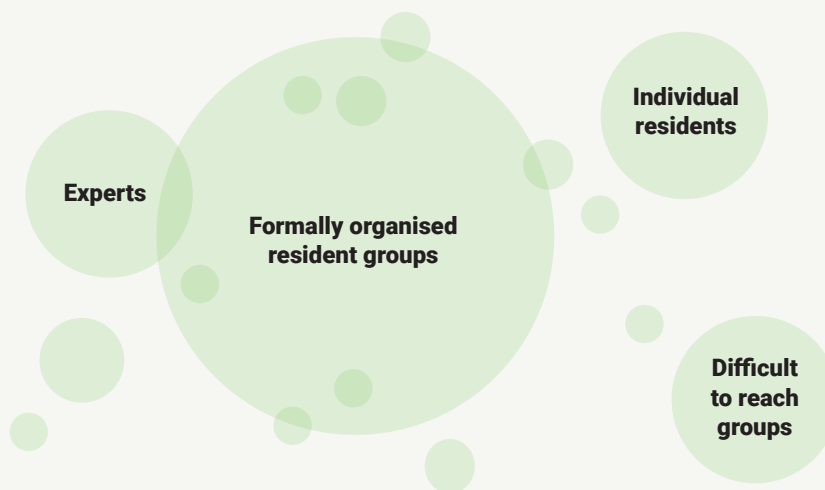


Figure 6: Social networks in the VIVA-PLAN case sites are divided into four general categories, linked to the planning and management of urban green and other green initiatives: (1) Experts such as planners, politicians and professionals, (2) Formally organized resident groups, (3) Individual residents and local champions, (4) Difficult to reach groups such as marginalized youth. As the figure illustrates, these networks are seldom isolated but rather are linked in complex and overlapping ways.

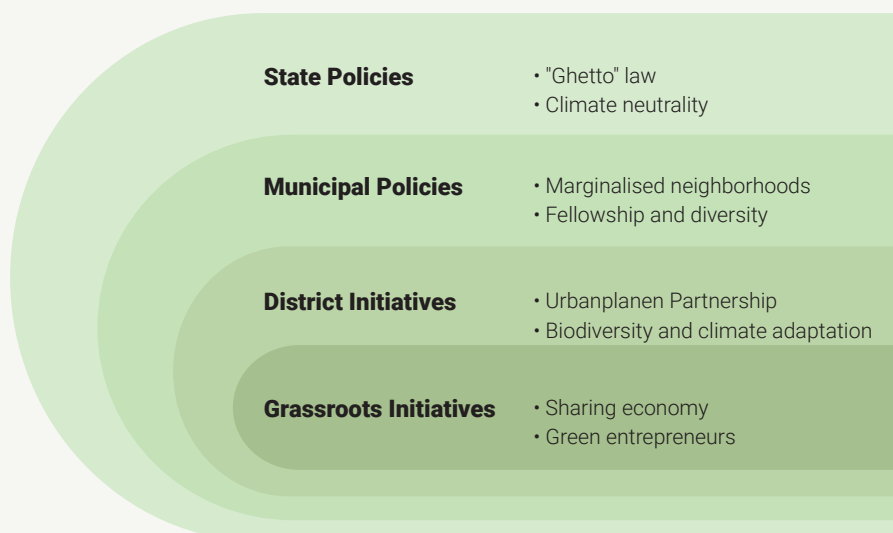


Figure 7: The nested networks of green governance in Urbanplanen, Copenhagen are divided into four layers moving from the very local to national: (1) Urbanplanen has over 70 active resident groups involved in formal and informal initiatives many of which are green; (2) The Partnership program at Urbanplanen is a social masterplan to support social and ecological development. In spirit, the project is driven by close partnerships between social workers and local grassroots initiatives, yet the success of the masterplan is evaluated on measures of safety, employment, education, and criminality informed by national policies; (3) The City of Copenhagen is committed to increasing the amount and quality of urban nature, to support more green meeting places, while meeting climate adaptation goals. Engaging unemployed and under-skilled residents in the job market is a top municipal priority and marginalized neighbourhoods such as Urbanplanen are in focus; (4) The Danish State "Ghetto plan" is a public housing policy that targets neighbourhoods such as Urbanplanen that do not meet state-set performance criteria around income, percentage of employment, levels of education, and proportion of residents with criminal conviction (<https://www.regeringen.dk/publikationer-og-aftaletekster/%C3%A9t-danmark-uden-parallelsamfund/>).

5.2 | Social network analysis results

Overarching results from our social network mapping in Urbanplanen reveal that residents and other actors are working together to adapt to and re-author social and ecological policies at all levels of mosaic governance in Urbanplanen, with a view to give more power to residents in decision making and to increase their overall safety, security and wellbeing. The majority of green initiatives at the local level are vehicles for social cohesion, as well as political resistance. Specifically, social and political networks at the local and district level coordinate efforts to create collective approaches to re-employment schemes, providing “safe spaces” for more marginalized residents. These approaches are based on an ethics of care and an inclusive community (Harcourt 2014). Local “networks of care” drive and support district and municipal green partnerships and initiatives. Municipal and State employment directives are re-authored by grassroots groups to fit and serve the relational needs of local residents. These local relational values are key to long-term management of urban green, including the scaling out and up of NBS.

Also in Ronna, Södertälje, there are nested networks of social actors who have a role in the governance of public green spaces. This includes urban green, and stretches of green located between residential housing and other infrastructure, and a larger sized urban forest. Most of these public natural areas are managed by the housing associations, who own and manage the public housing areas in close collaboration with the municipality. An interesting element of urban nature is the Ronna Forest, it develops as a long stretch along the housing blocks, and is adjacent to forested area. However, resident access and use of this area is limited by perceived safety and security concerns.

The results from our qualitative data collection in Ronna suggest that local actors cluster together and collaborate on topics and projects actively, to address youth’s needs for recreational activities, among other needs. However, field work reveals a scarcity of meeting places for local youth to socialise and recreate. Most of the activities organised by local associations have a strong focus on outdoor recreation and sport, only partly related to urban green issues. While there are social networks who organise around use and access to nature, these seem to be limited and also to be operating on the basis of membership to selected associations; for example, scouts and similar. Several local associations actively fill gaps in terms of creating opportunities to meet, recreate and practice sport locally in Ronna, building on sporting interests and ignoring other interests. Municipal support to local associations is well established and these regularly benefit from small grants. Local teenagers report on barriers to recreating and socializing outdoors, and often feel unwelcome in urban green areas that attract other demographics of people.

5.3 | Implications for just and sustainable spatial planning

Cities are seen as sites of environmental challenges, but also as critical sites of environmental solutions (Bai et al. 2018). Yet the nature, quality and delivery of urban green space is greatly influenced by political considerations; not only at the municipal level, but also within the “nested” context of urban environmental planning and governance, from the local to trans-national level (Laforteza et al. 2013). In this sense, the policy and governance processes for planning and implementation of urban green space, take on a critical role in determining the social, ecological, and economic configuration of urban landscapes. As the Urbanplanen case showed most prominently, mosaic governance can contribute to successfully working with, learning from, and scaling-up “networks of care” in the planning and management of urban green to provide valuable place-based perspectives of local residents. Such an approach can afford room for diverse social-cultural understandings and subjective values-driven perspectives. It can inform a more just approach to planning, by engaging new and frequently silenced voices in nature-based solutions (Nesbitt et al. 2018).

Photo courtesy of C. Haaland. Community gardens, Bellevuegården





6

Multi-audience co-creation events as a means to engage youth and planners in planning of green space and meetings places

The results of the two studies reported on in the previous sections have been used in two co-creation events, specifically developed within VIVA-PLAN, the VIVA-Hacks. The VIVA-Hack is an event that brings together insights from two different methods for citizen engagement: the Hackathon (*speed problem solving events, often relying on technology*) and a co-creation (*events where knowledge and expertise from a diversity of actors are appreciated and used on the task at hand*). Specifically, the VIVA-Hack aims to offer a platform for individual and social learning, by creating conditions for participants to work collaboratively on a challenge over a limited period of time; while sharing their diverse experience from a position of recognition that all experiences are valuable and needed. It is known that solutions to pressing issues that communities have are best developed with the local context as the focus, and in collaboration with local actors. The VIVA-Hack seeks to be the platform where these conditions are put in place.

*Photo courtesy of Emma Blomquist.
Ronna Event: work in groups.
August 2021.*



6.1 | The Process Design of the VIVA-Hack Event

Viva-Hacks conducted in Ronna and Urbanplanen, were informed by a three-step model (**Figure 8**). These first steps allowed us to develop understanding of the context, to map local issues as seen and described by the community itself, and to develop relationships with local actors who understand local dynamics and the challenges present in the community. Through informal networking as well as structured social science studies, information on local challenges and core social actors were identified. This information was then used to set up the event. In the second stage, the challenge was raised for discussion and there was further exploration among VIVA-Hack participants, including actors from the private and public sector, as well as activists in the area. At each event, we shared input to the participants in the form of qualitative and quantitative data, which participants used to develop questions and collaboratively explore possible answers to these. In the third stage, we conducted follow-up talks, and surveys with participants to identify the main learnings from the event, and how the VIVA-Hack could be improved in future research and practice.

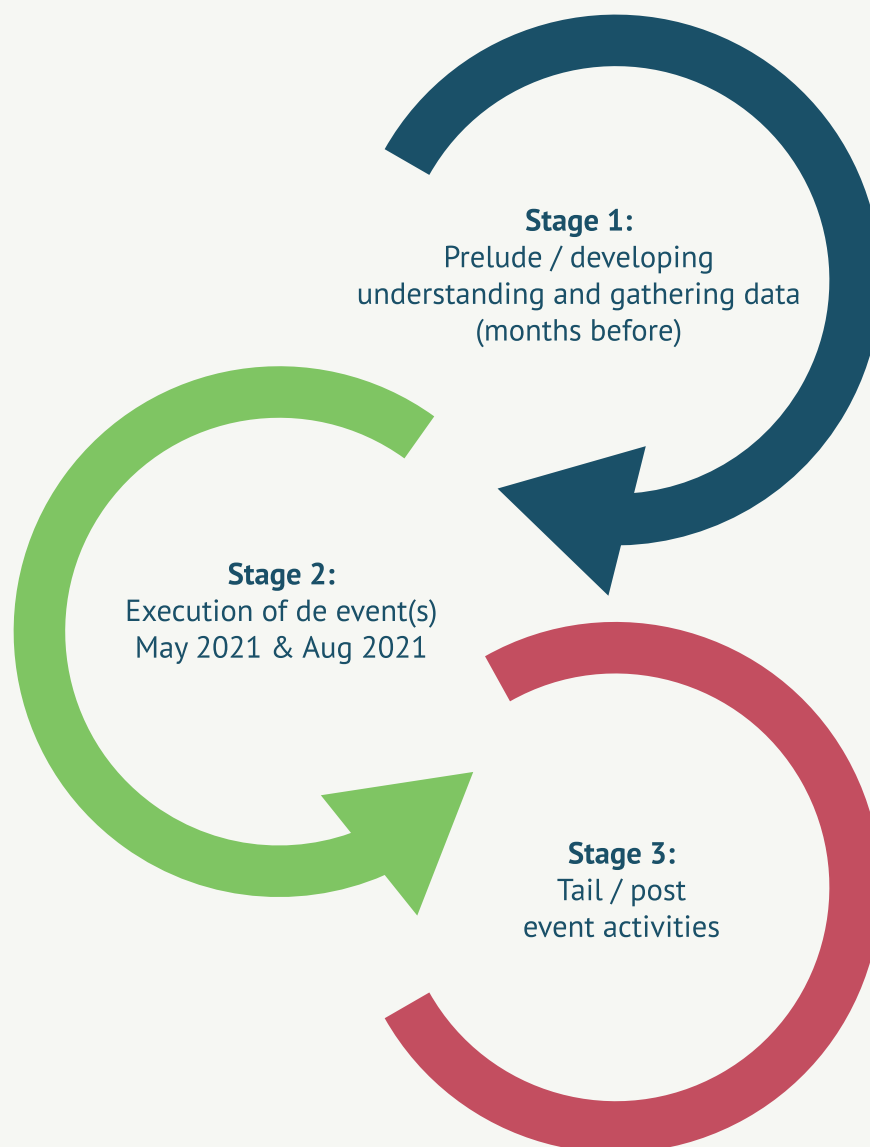


Figure 8: The three-stage process employed in the VIVA-Hack.

6.2 | Ronna event - Main activities and results

The aim of the VIVA-Hack in Ronna was to further discuss, identify, and explore inequalities in accessing and shaping urban nature, and meeting places in Ronna. We held two separate events. The first event was an afternoon workshop with six local youth residents aged 17 to 18 years. We used a paper and pencil participatory mapping method to map and discuss questions about places they like and dislike in Ronna, and why; what they would like to be different, and what could make Ronna a more sustainable living environment for them. We also asked the youth to put forward questions for discussion at the VIVA-Hack, and collected these suggestions for use on the day.

The second event was a full morning workshop with thirteen local stakeholders, which we co-organized in collaboration with a local association called LFI - Läsfrämjarinstitutet. The event was a challenge-driven co-creation event, where participants worked in small groups on three selected challenges. The challenges that we put forward for discussion at this event were: **1**: What changes are needed in Ronna to make this a more thriving, accessible, and enjoyable place for youth and adults to live? **2**: What changes are needed in order for youth to be seen by adults, and for them to feel welcome in outdoor areas and use different outdoor facilities? and **3**: How can planners promote, support and enable access to urban nature by local youth?

The session was facilitated so that the discussion was encouraged to be foremost ambitious and then narrowed down to what is feasible and what is not in terms of actions on the ground. This allowed the linking of ideal visions to what is feasible now, given the current resources, possibilities, and capacities.

The three groups came up with a number of suggestions and further elaborations of the challenges the Ronna community faces. Their suggestions include:

The non-profit sector that now engages in the community needs to keep collaborating with public authorities and fine-tuning use of resources around local needs.

Collaboration between different departments within the municipality could improve so to be best attuned to the local needs in Ronna.

There is a recognized and known lack of confidence the community has towards public authorities, that needs to be worked on by building enduring networks of trust.



Citizen proposals are being collected, appreciated and financed by the municipality, but the challenge of continuity and long term perspective when working with short projects remains.

Short term projects, without a permanent presence, are not able to keep up momentum and motivation for locals to be engaged. Future planning efforts could further explore how local residents could be more actively engaged in the management of green spaces and meeting spots.



There is a lack of meeting places for general recreational and socialisation needs for all ages, but for young people in particular. This could be addressed as part of long-term planning and policymaking.

The Ronna forest should be made more accessible by improving trail condition, improving lighting, and by creating more meeting places around the forest (e.g. soccer field) nearby.



There is a need to work on activities that cater to the needs of different age groups; for example, gardens can activate the elderly, and can contribute towards place-making and the strengthening of community cohesion. There is potential in “millirummen”; in-between areas, for such activities that are under-explored at the moment.

6.3 | Urbanplanen event - Main activities and results

The aim of the Urbanplanen event VIVA-Hack was to identify aspects of youth ownership over local greening initiatives, and resident values associated with biodiversity; and examine what the key areas of discussion and contestation are in the neighborhood. We employed a participatory action approach with youth and other community members, to identify youth preferences for urban green space. The event was structured over two days. The first day featured a youth-led greening day in Hørgården, a section of Urbanplanen; to observe and discuss on-site questions of youth preferences for involvement and empowerment in the planning and maintenance of green meeting spots. We partnered with a local organisation called FRAK, who employs local youth to maintain the green areas, and generate awareness around green leadership in local youth circles. On the second day we held a digital event with local

planners, activists and scholars where we discussed findings from the overall research project and our observations from day one. We debated and shared experiences regarding how to best identify and scale-up youth preferences, for a more just and sustainable approach to spatial planning. A total of 50 people attended including practitioners, researchers and decision makers with expertise in this area. The focus of the event was to generate a lively discussion; and to use digital brainstorming tools to capture feedback and insights from the attendees on best practice recommendations, for just and inclusive sustainable spatial planning.

The main suggestions included: how youth can influence urban green governance; suggestions on how to work across institutional and social networks to support just sustainable planning, and; how to work across institutional and social networks to support just and sustainable planning. More specific issues that emerged are:

Understanding youth perspectives through volunteerism and “democratic education” and programs is critical when working towards a just and sustainable management of green spaces and meeting spots.

Youth need physical space in the green and blue spaces of our cities - ownership, independence and the agency to make changes in a space that is their own.

Place-making and place-keeping exercises are key to youth ownership and engagement in green space management.

Supporting urban biodiversity requires consideration of both social and ecological values at the place-specific scale.

Working with diverse educational channels, including school classes at different ages and other groups focused on further educating the community at large, provides a great opportunity for communication and social learning.

Long-term collaboration with grass roots organisations, schools and specific neighbourhoods is essential to establish trust and relationships. Local champions that can translate the city-wide strategies (e.g., the social master plan in Urbanplanen, where local social workers engage neighbourhood groups in realising their ambitions, and link these engagements to broader agendas) are also crucial to enable long-term collaboration.



Financial and social resources are needed at the beginning of each urban development project. Potentially it should be a requirement for the development of urban land, that 20% of all budgets be dedicated to local engagement with youth and adults.



6.4 | Implications of findings for just and sustainable spatial planning

Engaging with and identifying visions, demands and challenges from socially marginalised groups remains critical for sustainable spatial planning. Trust is a critical issue in collaborations with marginalised groups. Long-term commitment and focus on the implementation of solutions discussed with the community remains vital. To build trust and collaboration on just transformations towards green and inclusive cities, single-co-creations events need to be embedded within other ways of engaging with the community. The Urbanplanen examples of building nested collaborations towards mosaic governance may be helpful. The Ronna example of collaborating with sport activities is a nice example of engagement attuned to daily practices of local youth. Developing novel engagement approaches like the 'VIVA-Hack' involving local volunteers, local organisations, residents and government has a crucial role in the upscaling of greening and social inclusion initiatives.

Photo courtesy of Anna Earl: girl growing a plant.





7

Recommendations for sustainable spatial planning across Sweden and Denmark

The VIVA-PLAN project has, over three years, conducted research and organised co-creation events across three cases and sought to study how to go about the elicitation of values, preferences and concerns of marginalised residents; in particular youth and new migrants, with respect to nature-based solutions in residential housing areas, and how this can be then up-scaled to inform participator spatial planning for more sustainable living environment. Based on the data collected, engagement in these communities, and work completed, we put forward the following recommendations:

There is a need to test and use innovative methods for engaging marginalised groups, including new migrants and youth. More creative and less formal methods are more likely to succeed compared to formal workshops and town hall meetings.

Combining multiple methods for engagement allows us to reach out to a diversity of groups. In addition, it enables planners to cross-check different sources of information and contribute to grounded and rich insights into the community and the strengthening of local networks.

There is an untapped potential in terms of informal local organising and mobilising which often goes unnoticed in sustainable spatial planning. Young demographic groups, while having interest, time, and motivation, might not always be aware, or able to identify ways how they can engage in local matters and influence decision making at local level.

There is a need to create opportunities for communities to access information, in ways that are best understood and assimilated across different groups, inclusive of the younger demographic groups.

There is potential to capitalise on existing resources and social networks, to deliver meaningful participatory processes for young people.

The classification of communities as marginalised or vulnerable by public institutions, may impact negatively on the use and access to meeting places and urban nature by youth who end up having limited outdoor recreation opportunities.

A mosaic governance approach with deliberate support of social networks with the local community, and provision of critical resources, such as knowledge, funding or expertise requires long term efforts and engagement with the community. In time, this may contribute to building trust, and aligning government and community needs towards vital, green, and safe neighbourhoods.

*Photo courtesy of
Shane Rounce*



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FORMAS



PROJECT COORDINATOR

PARTNERS



For further information, please contact Prof. Christopher Raymond, project coordinator at
christopher.raymond@slu.se
or visit our website at www.viva-plan.eu